

**Statement of**  
George A. H. Williams  
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TASC, Inc.

**before**  
the Committee on Government Reform  
United States House of Representatives

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**TASC in Illinois**

TASC (Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities) is a statewide not-for-profit organization that provides access to recovery and other specialized services for individuals involved in Illinois' criminal justice, corrections, juvenile justice, child welfare and public aid systems. TASC's programs reach over 30,000 people across the State each year, including its Corrections Transitional Programs that provide clinical case management to more than 4,000 adults annually who are reentering the community following incarceration. TASC works with an array of service providers and community partners, including treatment, recovery support, non-traditional providers and faith-based organizations throughout Illinois.

TASC is challenged every day with helping our clients to overcome the existing obstacles that prevent them from accessing critical services and resources. Most of our clients are ill-equipped for lives of stability, health and self-sufficiency. Many have substance use or mental health issues that were in existence before their incarceration. Many need legitimate employment, stable housing and community support to have any hope of a crime-free lifestyle. For most of our clients, successful reintegration requires the careful and deliberate navigation of an array of programs, public systems, communities and the demands and expectations placed on returning offenders.

To address the many barriers faced by our clients, TASC helps parolees complete their justice requirements and successfully reintegrate into their communities. Our programs work to develop collaborative, systems-level responses that balance the supervisory, health, welfare and justice needs of the ex-offender, his or her family and community. By acting as an independent entity, TASC utilizes a clinical case management approach to integrate all of these requirements into a service delivery plan tailored to the unique needs of each individual and is also responsive to the need for accountability, public safety and efficient use of public resources.

A primary goal for TASC's case management model is "restoring citizenship." This entails supporting and guiding former offenders as they learn positive ways of thinking, living and being. TASC transforms lives formerly characterized by involvement with drugs and the criminal justice system by working with individuals to learn the meaning and rewards of genuine self-care and respect for others. TASC clients develop the skills,

attitudes and behaviors that are consistent with good citizenship, including assuming responsibility for self-direction and making positive contributions to their families, workplaces and communities. In the process of restoring citizenship, there is a healing of past harms and reassurance to victims, families and communities that change is possible. To accomplish these goals, TASC also works closely with community members and organizations to help them build their own capacity to support and reintegrate ex-offenders.

### **The Second Chance Act**

TASC is in full support of The Second Chance Act to help reduce the numerous barriers facing men and women as a result of incarceration. The Second Chance Act is a necessary first step toward reducing the high recidivism rate and the costs that accompany recidivism and repeated incarcerations, including threats to public health and safety. This legislation begins the process for ensuring better coordination and planning for release, providing necessary drug treatment and recovery support services, job training and education, housing services and family assistance upon release. TASC strongly urges Congress to support this legislation to improve the health, justice, welfare and safety of all of our residents and communities. Thank you Chairman Davis and members of the Committee for your inviting me to testify before you today.